

## § 2635.101

## 5 CFR Ch. XVI (1–1–11 Edition)

2635.606 Disqualification based on an arrangement concerning prospective employment or otherwise after negotiations.

### Subpart G—Misuse of Position

2635.701 Overview.  
2635.702 Use of public office for private gain.  
2635.703 Use of nonpublic information.  
2635.704 Use of Government property.  
2635.705 Use of official time.

### Subpart H—Outside Activities

2635.801 Overview.  
2635.802 Conflicting outside employment and activities.  
2635.803 Prior approval for outside employment and activities.  
2635.804 Outside earned income limitations applicable to certain Presidential appointees and other noncareer employees.  
2635.805 Service as an expert witness.  
2635.806 Participation in professional associations. [Reserved]  
2635.807 Teaching, speaking and writing.  
2635.808 Fundraising activities.  
2635.809 Just financial obligations.

### Subpart I—Related Statutory Authorities

2635.901 General.  
2635.902 Related statutes.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 7301, 7351, 7353; 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978); E.O. 12674, 54 FR 15159, 3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 215, as modified by E.O. 12731, 55 FR 42547, 3 CFR, 1990 Comp., p. 306.

SOURCE: 57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—General Provisions

#### § 2635.101 Basic obligation of public service.

(a) *Public service is a public trust.* Each employee has a responsibility to the United States Government and its citizens to place loyalty to the Constitution, laws and ethical principles above private gain. To ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government, each employee shall respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct set forth in this section, as well as the implementing standards contained in this part and in supplemental agency regulations.

(b) *General principles.* The following general principles apply to every employee and may form the basis for the standards contained in this part. Where

a situation is not covered by the standards set forth in this part, employees shall apply the principles set forth in this section in determining whether their conduct is proper.

(1) Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws and ethical principles above private gain.

(2) Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

(3) Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

(4) An employee shall not, except as permitted by subpart B of this part, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of the employee's duties.

(5) Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

(6) Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

(7) Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

(8) Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

(9) Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

(10) Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

(11) Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

(12) Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those—such as Federal, State, or local taxes—that are imposed by law.

(13) Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

(14) Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards set forth in this part. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or these standards have been violated shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts.

(c) *Related statutes.* In addition to the standards of ethical conduct set forth in this part, there are conflict of interest statutes that prohibit certain conduct. Criminal conflict of interest statutes of general applicability to all employees, 18 U.S.C. 201, 203, 205, 208, and 209, are summarized in the appropriate subparts of this part and must be taken into consideration in determining whether conduct is proper. Citations to other generally applicable statutes relating to employee conduct are set forth in subpart I and employees are further cautioned that there may be additional statutory and regulatory restrictions applicable to them generally or as employees of their specific agencies. Because an employee is considered to be on notice of the requirements of any statute, an employee should not rely upon any description or synopsis of a statutory restriction, but should refer to the statute itself and obtain the advice of an agency ethics official as needed.

#### § 2635.102 Definitions.

The definitions listed below are used throughout this part. Additional definitions appear in the subparts or sections of subparts to which they apply. For purposes of this part:

(a) *Agency* means an executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105 and the Postal Service and the Postal Rate Commission. It does not include the General Accounting Office or the Government of the District of Columbia.

(b) *Agency designee* refers to any employee who, by agency regulation, instruction, or other issuance, has been delegated authority to make any determination, give any approval, or take

any other action required or permitted by this part with respect to another employee. An agency may delegate these authorities to any number of agency designees necessary to ensure that determinations are made, approvals are given, and other actions are taken in a timely and responsible manner. Any provision that requires a determination, approval, or other action by the agency designee shall, where the conduct in issue is that of the agency head, be deemed to require that such determination, approval or action be made or taken by the agency head in consultation with the designated agency ethics official.

(c) *Agency ethics official* refers to the designated agency ethics official or to the alternate designated agency ethics official, referred to in § 2638.202(b) of this chapter, and to any deputy ethics official, described in § 2638.204 of this chapter, who has been delegated authority to assist in carrying out the responsibilities of the designated agency ethics official.

(d) *Agency programs or operations* refers to any program or function carried out or performed by an agency, whether pursuant to statute, Executive order, or regulation.

(e) *Corrective action* includes any action necessary to remedy a past violation or prevent a continuing violation of this part, including but not limited to restitution, change of assignment, disqualification, divestiture, termination of an activity, waiver, the creation of a qualified diversified or blind trust, or counseling.

(f) *Designated agency ethics official* refers to the official designated under § 2638.201 of this chapter.

(g) *Disciplinary action* includes those disciplinary actions referred to in Office of Personnel Management regulations and instructions implementing provisions of title 5 of the United States Code or provided for in comparable provisions applicable to employees not subject to title 5, including but not limited to reprimand, suspension, demotion, and removal. In the case of a military officer, comparable provisions may include those in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

(h) *Employee* means any officer or employee of an agency, including a special

Government employee. It includes officers but not enlisted members of the uniformed services. It includes employees of a State or local government or other organization who are serving on detail to an agency, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3371, *et seq.* For purposes other than subparts B and C of this part, it does not include the President or Vice President. Status as an employee is unaffected by pay or leave status or, in the case of a special Government employee, by the fact that the individual does not perform official duties on a given day.

(i) *Head of an agency* means, in the case of an agency headed by more than one person, the chair or comparable member of such agency.

(j) *He, his, and him* include she, hers and her.

(k) *Person* means an individual, corporation and subsidiaries it controls, company, association, firm, partnership, society, joint stock company, or any other organization or institution, including any officer, employee, or agent of such person or entity. For purposes of this part, a corporation will be deemed to control a subsidiary if it owns 50 percent or more of the subsidiary's voting securities. The term is all-inclusive and applies to commercial ventures and nonprofit organizations as well as to foreign, State, and local governments, including the Government of the District of Columbia. It does not include any agency or other entity of the Federal Government or any officer or employee thereof when acting in his official capacity on behalf of that agency or entity.

(l) *Special Government employee* means those executive branch officers or employees specified in 18 U.S.C. 202(a). A special Government employee is retained, designated, appointed, or employed to perform temporary duties either on a full-time or intermittent basis, with or without compensation, for a period not to exceed 130 days during any consecutive 365-day period.

(m) *Supplemental agency regulation* means a regulation issued pursuant to § 2635.105.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 45736, Aug. 10, 2006]

**§ 2635.103 Applicability to members of the uniformed services.**

The provisions of this part, except this section, are not applicable to enlisted members of the uniformed services. Each agency with jurisdiction over enlisted members of the uniformed services shall issue regulations defining the ethical conduct obligations of enlisted members under its jurisdiction. Those regulations shall be consistent with Executive Order 12674, April 12, 1989, as modified, and may prescribe the full range of statutory and regulatory sanctions, including those available under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, for failure to comply with such regulations.

**§ 2635.104 Applicability to employees on detail.**

(a) *Details to other agencies.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, an employee on detail, including a uniformed officer on assignment, from his employing agency to another agency for a period in excess of 30 calendar days shall be subject to any supplemental agency regulations of the agency to which he is detailed rather than to any supplemental agency regulations of his employing agency.

(b) *Details to the legislative or judicial branch.* An employee on detail, including a uniformed officer on assignment, from his employing agency to the legislative or judicial branch for a period in excess of 30 calendar days shall be subject to the ethical standards of the branch or entity to which detailed. For the duration of any such detail or assignment, the employee shall not be subject to the provisions of this part, except this section, or, except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, to any supplemental agency regulations of his employing agency, but shall remain subject to the conflict of interest prohibitions in title 18 of the United States Code.

(c) *Details to non-Federal entities.* Except to the extent exempted in writing pursuant to this paragraph, an employee detailed to a non-Federal entity remains subject to this part and to any supplemental agency regulation of his employing agency. When an employee

is detailed pursuant to statutory authority to an international organization or to a State or local government for a period in excess of six months, the designated agency ethics official may grant a written exemption from subpart B of this part based on his determination that the entity has adopted written ethical standards covering solicitation and acceptance of gifts which will apply to the employee during the detail and which will be appropriate given the purpose of the detail.

(d) *Applicability of special agency statutes.* Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, an employee who is subject to an agency statute which restricts his activities or financial holdings specifically because of his status as an employee of that agency shall continue to be subject to any provisions in the supplemental agency regulations of his employing agency that implement that statute.

#### § 2635.105 Supplemental agency regulations.

In addition to the regulations set forth in this part, an employee shall comply with any supplemental agency regulations issued by his employing agency under this section.

(a) An agency that wishes to supplement this part shall prepare and submit to the Office of Government Ethics, for its concurrence and joint issuance, any agency regulations that supplement the regulations contained in this part. Supplemental agency regulations which the agency determines are necessary and appropriate, in view of its programs and operations, to fulfill the purposes of this part shall be:

(1) In the form of a supplement to the regulations in this part; and

(2) In addition to the substantive provisions of this part.

(b) After concurrence and co-signature by the Office of Government Ethics, the agency shall submit its supplemental agency regulations to the FEDERAL REGISTER for publication and codification at the expense of the agency in title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Supplemental agency regulations issued under this section are effective only after concurrence and co-signature by the Office of Government

Ethics and publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(c) This section applies to any supplemental agency regulations or amendments thereof issued under this part. It does not apply to:

(1) A handbook or other issuance intended merely as an explanation of the standards contained in this part or in supplemental agency regulations;

(2) An instruction or other issuance the purpose of which is to:

(i) Delegate to an agency designee authority to make any determination, give any approval or take any other action required or permitted by this part or by supplemental agency regulations; or

(ii) Establish internal agency procedures for documenting or processing any determination, approval or other action required or permitted by this part or by supplemental agency regulations, or for retaining any such documentation; or

(3) Regulations or instructions that an agency has authority, independent of this part, to issue, such as regulations implementing an agency's gift acceptance statute, protecting categories of nonpublic information or establishing standards for use of Government vehicles. Where the content of any such regulations or instructions was included in the agency's standards of conduct regulations issued pursuant to Executive Order 11222 and the Office of Government Ethics concurs that they need not be issued as part of an agency's supplemental agency regulations, those regulations or instructions may be promulgated separately from the agency's supplemental agency regulations.

(d) Employees of a State or local government or other organization who are serving on detail to an agency, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3371, *et seq.*, are subject to any requirements, in addition to those in this part, established by a supplemental agency regulation issued under this section to the extent that such regulation expressly provides.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 45736, Aug. 10, 2006]

**§ 2635.106 Disciplinary and corrective action.**

(a) Except as provided in § 2635.107, a violation of this part or of supplemental agency regulations may be cause for appropriate corrective or disciplinary action to be taken under applicable Governmentwide regulations or agency procedures. Such action may be in addition to any action or penalty prescribed by law.

(b) It is the responsibility of the employing agency to initiate appropriate disciplinary or corrective action in individual cases. However, corrective action may be ordered or disciplinary action recommended by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics under the procedures at part 2638 of this chapter.

(c) A violation of this part or of supplemental agency regulations, as such, does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by any person against the United States, its agencies, its officers or employees, or any other person. Thus, for example, an individual who alleges that an employee has failed to adhere to laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap is required to follow applicable statutory and regulatory procedures, including those of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

**§ 2635.107 Ethics advice.**

(a) As required by §§ 2638.201 and 2638.202(b) of this chapter, each agency has a designated agency ethics official who, on the agency's behalf, is responsible for coordinating and managing the agency's ethics program, as well as an alternate. The designated agency ethics official has authority under § 2638.204 of this chapter to delegate certain responsibilities, including that of providing ethics counseling regarding the application of this part, to one or more deputy ethics officials.

(b) Employees who have questions about the application of this part or any supplemental agency regulations to particular situations should seek advice from an agency ethics official. Disciplinary action for violating this part or any supplemental agency regu-

lations will not be taken against an employee who has engaged in conduct in good faith reliance upon the advice of an agency ethics official, provided that the employee, in seeking such advice, has made full disclosure of all relevant circumstances. Where the employee's conduct violates a criminal statute, reliance on the advice of an agency ethics official cannot ensure that the employee will not be prosecuted under that statute. However, good faith reliance on the advice of an agency ethics official is a factor that may be taken into account by the Department of Justice in the selection of cases for prosecution. Disclosures made by an employee to an agency ethics official are not protected by an attorney-client privilege. An agency ethics official is required by 28 U.S.C. 535 to report any information he receives relating to a violation of the criminal code, title 18 of the United States Code.

**Subpart B—Gifts From Outside Sources**

**§ 2635.201 Overview.**

This subpart contains standards that prohibit an employee from soliciting or accepting any gift from a prohibited source or given because of the employee's official position unless the item is excluded from the definition of a gift or falls within one of the exceptions set forth in this subpart.

**§ 2635.202 General standards.**

(a) *General prohibitions.* Except as provided in this subpart, an employee shall not, directly or indirectly, solicit or accept a gift:

- (1) From a prohibited source; or
- (2) Given because of the employee's official position.

(b) *Relationship to illegal gratuities statute.* Unless accepted in violation of paragraph (c)(1) of this section, a gift accepted under the standards set forth in this subpart shall not constitute an illegal gratuity otherwise prohibited by 18 U.S.C. 201(c)(1)(B).

(c) *Limitations on use of exceptions.* Notwithstanding any exception provided in this subpart, other than § 2635.204(j), an employee shall not: